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ROBINSON, EDWIN VAN DYKE. *Early Economic Conditions and the Development of Agriculture in Minnesota.* Pp. v, 306. Price, \$1.50. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1915.

This big folio volume of 300 pages is a cross between a census report and the work of a German scholar. It is a storehouse of knowledge for the student of economic history, economic geography and agriculture. Its character is well indicated by its evolution. It started out to be a statistical atlas but the increasing realization that these maps, charts and graphs needed to be explained caused the author to dig and delve into contemporary publications, correspond with many of the men who had pushed along the developments, and thus he added many thousand words of text. Even the chinch bug has a map, as have practically all of the factors of agricultural development at each census period. Climatic data are also carefully mapped. The book is one that must be consulted by almost every person venturing to speak of Minnesota in any careful way. It is a matter of great regret that this is the last work of Professor Robinson who died a few months after the book appeared.

J. R. S.

#### MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY

NYSTROM, PAUL H. *Textiles.* Pp. xviii, 335. Price, \$1.50. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1916.

This book presents in concise form the essential facts regarding the ordinary textiles of commerce, with especial attention to the leading members of this group; namely, linen, wool, cotton and silk. The chapters deal with the sources of the raw material, the methods of marketing and manufacture, the tests to determine quality, and the economic aspects of textiles.

The author states in his preface that he intended to interest retail and wholesale salespeople, housewives, educational institutions and the general public. It is an exceedingly difficult task to write a book for an audience so diverse as this and have the work profitable to all its readers upon all its pages, and Dr. Nystrom has not mastered the complications of his undertaking; hence no one who picks up the book will be completely satisfied with it.

Furthermore, the author touches upon so many topics that it is inevitable that his work will contain not a few inaccuracies; such as, confusing *wool* with *hair*, and declaring that *cotton* comes from the *seed* of the cotton plant, or drawing the inference that because labor is minutely subdivided in the manufacture of shoes and men's clothing that it is equally specialized in all industries. From the closeness with which Dr. Nystrom follows standard authorities upon the chief textiles, we are at liberty to suppose that he himself is none too familiar with his subject; and moreover he limits himself to statements of facts with almost no explanation of the factors of causation behind those facts, a flaw most noticeable in the chapters on the Geography of the Cotton Trade and the Geography of Wool Production.

While writing, the author must have had most prominently before his mind the retail salesgirl portion of his audience for the literary style of the book nowhere advances beyond the intelligence of such a person.

Notwithstanding these objections to the book, it may be of real service as a class room text, for it summarizes most of the important facts in regard to textiles; retail and wholesale salespeople and housewives, also, would profit greatly by giving it a careful study.

MALCOLM KEIR.

*University of Pennsylvania.*

#### COMMERCE AND TRANSPORTATION

KIBLER, THOMAS L. *The Commodities' Clause.* Pp. 178. Price, \$3.00. Washington: John Byrne and Company, 1916.

Professor Kibler presents a brief but adequate history of the attempts of transportation companies in the United States to engage in the business of mining and manufacturing commodities to be transported by their own lines; and of the attempts to prevent such combination of interests. He takes a strong and effective stand against combinations of this kind.

T. W. V. M.

McFALL, ROBERT JAMES. *Railway Monopoly and Rate Regulation.* Pp. 223. Price, \$2.00. New York: Columbia University Press, 1916.

A discussion of the various theories of railroad rate making, with an argument in favor of the cost-of-service theory. Dr. McFall points out the advance made in recent years in the use of cost as a basis for the determination of reasonable rates, and endeavors to show that the proportion of costs which can be definitely allocated is larger "than many would have us suppose." It is interesting to note, however, that in concluding his argument for an extension of the cost principle the author says that "the greater divisions of the service should have their contributions to total cost divided as far as possible on the basis of cost, but that the rates on minor divisions of the service should be differentiated not only on the principle of cost but also on the principle of demand." After all this is the position taken by the hardened traffic official who is guided by the principle of "what the traffic will bear."

In attributing virtually a complete monopoly power to the railroads Dr. McFall gives too little consideration to such factors as water competition (potential or active) and industrial and commercial competition—factors which often compel and justify the neglect of the cost-of-service principle.

The most valuable and interesting portion of this study is that dealing with valuation of railway property. The author's conclusions as to the value to be attributed to a railroad in considering the question of a "fair return" seem eminently sound.

T. W. V. M.

PRATT, EDWIN A. *The Rise of Rail Power in War and Conquest.* Pp. xii, 405. Price, 7s. 6d. London: P. S. King and Son, Ltd., 1915.

In this instructive and timely work the author traces the beginnings and subsequent development of the use of railways in war. In this use no other nation has gone as far or proceeded with the scientific accuracy of the Germans.